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FEDERAL GAME WARDENS
SHOT FROM AMBUSH

K. F. Roahen and M. A. Charlton, game wardens of the Biological Survey, United States Department of Agriculture, on March 3 were shot from ambush, while performing official duty in the Sangamon River bottoms, Illinois, both of them receiving serious injuries. They are still under the care of physicians and it will be several weeks before they can return to duty.

Warden Charlton, who is in charge of the Ohio district, was on special duty in Illinois assisting Warden Roahen in suppressing violations of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act in the Illinois River region. They had heard considerable shooting and, while gradually working toward the point where it was going on, discovered a full case of shotgun shells and two sheep-lined coats. As they stopped to make observations with a view to locating the hunters, a man concealed behind a tree about 25 yards away, evidently a guard for the hunters, opened fire on them with a shotgun. That the violators were market hunters was evident from the case of shells and the fact that a guard was watching for persons who might disturb them in their illegal activities.

The wardens had practically no cover whatever from the fire, and although they returned it, the assailant was well protected by the tree in front of him, and at the sound of firing was joined by two of his companions.

The three then closed in on the wardens, all of the hunters keeping well protected behind trees. It is thought that the one who started the shooting was wounded for he called to the wardens that if they would retreat, he and his companions would do likewise and there would be no more shots exchanged. As the wardens were practically surrounded and their gun hands so weak they could not use them, this was their only choice.

The two wardens, with dozens of No. 5 shot in their bodies, had to walk back through the river bottoms about five miles to their boat, row for some distance, and then drive to the nearest town, more than 25 miles away, before they could receive medical attention.

Immediately following the shooting, both Federal and State agencies were put to work in an effort to apprehend the assailants. In addition, a reward of \$500 has been offered by the Chicago Chapter of the Isaak Walton League of Illinois for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the guilty parties. While the men who did the shooting have not been apprehended, several clues have been unearthed, and it is believed the assailants will be arrested at an early date. This is the second attempt to murder U. S. game wardens in the Illinois River region, a Federal deputy having been wounded by an unknown person about two years ago while in the performance of his official duty.